

**Statement from the United Nations Regional Commissions  
Hammamet, Tunisia, 26 June 2005**

By Makane Faye, ECA  
On behalf of the UN Regional Commissions

In the name of the United Nations Regional Commissions, present at PrepCom-1, (Economic Commission for Africa –ECA-, Economic Commission for Latin America and The Caribbean –ECLAC-, Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific- ESCAP-, and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia – ESCWA-) we would like to address the following issues concerning the WSIS:

- What has been done so far by the UN Regional Commissions
- What we are doing presently, and
- What we intend to do

The United Nations Regional Commissions are deeply committed to the WSIS and are assisting their member States on a permanent basis on the relevant issues required by the process. The first phase of the Summit has shown that the regional dimension was essential for the success of the Summit. As you may recall the five regional preparatory conferences were organized by the UN Regional Commissions in cooperation with our member States as essential elements of the regional contributions to the WSIS.

Based on the positive experience gained from the first phase, the UN Regional Commissions will continue, as mandated by the UN General Assembly, to bring regional perspectives to the global process. In this regard and in line with the Geneva Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action, the Regional Commissions are working closely together for successful implementation. Our proximity to our members ensures wide geographical coverage. One of our initiatives deals with Monitoring and Measuring the information society. In partnership with UNCTAD, the UN ICT Task Force, ITU, OECD, UNESCO, World Bank and IDRC, UN Regional Commissions are undertaking a worldwide inventory with national statistical offices on information society statistics. Between September and December 2004, regional workshops will be organized by UN RCs to discuss global requirements and regional particularities on ICT statistics. The goal is to ensure that the specificities of developing countries are recognized in statistical methodologies and that these countries develop capacity to collect, process, analyze and disseminate internationally comparable indicators. Outputs of the

regional workshops will be fed into a thematic meeting on indicators to be held in February 2005 in Geneva. Promoting and coordinating an initiative at the regional level to feed in a global process ensures effective participation and involvement of all stakeholders in a relatively short time.

On the two Working Groups recommended by the Geneva Plan of Action, the Regional Commissions are ready to contribute to the work of the Task Force on Financing to facilitate consultations with stakeholders at the regional level. They will also continue to strengthen their participation on Internet Governance activities to build consensus at the regional level.

Following the success of the first phase, we intend to assist our member States in organizing regional preparatory conferences, in Africa (Accra, February 2005), Asia Pacific (2005), Latin America and The Caribbean (2004 & 2005), Western Asia (Damascus, November 2004). Regional thematic consultations will provide substance to the planned regional meetings.

It is envisaged that these regional preparatory conferences will contribute to assessing implementation of the Geneva decisions, identifying specific challenges to derive policy implications and developing regional plans of action that would contribute to the implementation of targets set by WSIS up to 2015.

To conclude, I would like to stress that the UN Regional Commissions are ready to work with member States towards Tunis 2005 and beyond and we invite them to make use of our resources which are also their own.

Thank you.